LONDON, 20*th June*, 1876.

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF CARNARVON,

Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies,
&c., &c., &c., &c.

MY LORD,

I feel compelled to trespass briefly on your Lordship's attention in relation a subject which is of the greatest importance to the Dominion of Canada, and ch has, no doubt, already been under your Lordship's anxious consideration.

The subject I allude to, is the Merchant Shipping Bill of 1876, which has ntly passed its third reading in the House of Commons, and has been read a first e in the House of Lords.

The Bill referred to, applies to Canadian ships when out of Canadian inland ers, as a Canadian ship is held by the Imperial authorities to be a British ship, and ubject, therefore, to all the restrictions and penalties, to which a British ship is ject.

The British North America Imperial Act of 1867, section 91, gives power to Parliament of Canada to legislate on the subjects of navigation and shipping, but is held by the authorities referred to, to mean within the waters of Canada, and n Canadian ships are outside such waters, they come under the Imperial Merchant pping Act and its amendments.

The Acts alluded to, have been passed from time to time, since the year 1854, the Imperial Parliament, composed of the representatives of the people of the ited Kingdom, but Canadians have no voice or representation in such Parliament, if the laws relating to Merchant Shipping have of late years become onerous or rictive to the shipowners of the United Kingdom, as has been frequently alleged them, it is a matter for themselves to rectify, through their representatives in the use of Commons, in which Chamber, legislation on shipping usually originates, and well-known, that the shipowners of Great Britain form a very important, influential, lthy, and intelligent element in the community. If their interests have suffered, refore, by over-legislation, or too restrictive or onerous legislation, they have, oretically, the remedy in their own hands, through their representatives in the use of Commons, as legislation proposed by the Government, must be supported by ajority of the representatives of the people, before it can become law.

If the Imperial laws relating to shipping, which govern Canadian ships out of ada, bear unequally on the foreign going tonnage of Canada, as compared with the nage of the United Kingdom, and Canadian shipowners most positively assert that y do, such shipowners have no remedy within their reach, and are not consulted as he kind of legislation which would suit their interests. All they can do legitimately he matter, is to ask their representatives in the Canadian House of Commons, to l the attention of the Canadian Government to the injustice (as they term it) which eing inflicted on their interests as shipowners, and to request them, to make such resentations to the Imperial Government as will induce them, when proposing their islation on this complicated subject, so to shape it, as not to injure this branch of ustry of the Dominion, and, at the same time, provide sufficient precautions and urities for the safety of human life. This is the only legitimate manner in which

LONDON, 20*th June*, 1876.

To

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF CARNARVON,

Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies,
&c., &c., &c., &c.

MY LORD,

I feel compelled to trespass briefly on your Lordship's attention in relation to a subject which is of the greatest importance to the Dominion of Canada, and which has, no doubt, already been under your Lordship's anxious consideration.

The subject I allude to, is the Merchant Shipping Bill of 1876, which has recently passed its third reading in the House of Commons, and has been read a first time in the House of Lords.

The Bill referred to, applies to Canadian ships when out of Canadian inland waters, as a Canadian ship is held by the Imperial authorities to be a British ship, and is subject, therefore, to all the restrictions and penalties, to which a British ship is subject.

The British North America Imperial Act of 1867, section 91, gives power to the Parliament of Canada to legislate on the subjects of navigation and shipping, but that is held by the authorities referred to, to mean within the waters of Canada, and when Canadian ships are outside such waters, they come under the Imperial Merchant Shipping Act and its amendments.

The Acts alluded to, have been passed from time to time, since the year 1854, by the Imperial Parliament, composed of the representatives of the people of the United Kingdom, but Canadians have no voice or representation in such Parliament, and if the laws relating to Merchant Shipping have of late years become onerous or restrictive to the shipowners of the United Kingdom, as has been frequently alleged by them, it is a matter for themselves to rectify, through their representatives in the House of Commons, in which Chamber, legislation on shipping usually originates, and it is well-known, that the shipowners of Great Britain form a very important, influential, wealthy, and intelligent element in the community. If their interests have suffered, therefore, by over-legislation, or too restrictive or onerous legislation, they have, theoretically, the remedy in their own hands, through their representatives in the House of Commons, as legislation proposed by the Government, must be supported by a majority of the representatives of the people, before it can become law.

If the Imperial laws relating to shipping, which govern Canadian ships out of Canada, bear unequally on the foreign going tonnage of Canada, as compared with the tonnage of the United Kingdom, and Canadian shipowners most positively assert that they do, such shipowners have no remedy within their reach, and are not consulted as to the kind of legislation which would suit their interests. All they can do legitimately in the matter, is to ask their representatives in the Canadian House of Commons, to call the attention of the Canadian Government to the injustice (as they term it) which is being inflicted on their interests as shipowners, and to request them, to make such representations to the Imperial Government as will induce them, when proposing their legislation on this complicated subject, so to shape it, as not to injure this branch of industry of the Dominion, and, at the same time, provide sufficient precautions and securities for the safety of human life. This is the only legitimate manner in which

the Canadian shipowner can be heard by those to whom is entrusted the responsible duty of making laws, not only for the shipping of the United Kingdom, but also for Canada and the rest of the British Possessions.

It may be asked, in what respect do the Marine Laws of the United Kingdom bear more heavily on the Canadian shipowner, than on the shipowner of the United Kingdom? and in reply, the Canadian shipowner states, that in carrying on his business, his ship must frequently visit England, and that in the event of any complaint for alleged unseaworthiness being made against her, while in a port in the United Kingdom, or after her departure from such port, it is a very serious thing for him, living as he does, three thousand miles away from the scene of action, either to come here, and defend himself, at a heavy expense from the operation of a British law, which if his innocence could not be proved for want of witnesses or otherwise, might punish him both civilly and criminally, and in the making of which law, although a British subject, he had no voice or representation. But if, on the other hand, he found himself unable to come and look after his ship, and defend himself in England, where he could more readily obtain his proofs of innocence and find his witnesses, the law might, and most probably would follow him out to Canada, and although he might succeed in proving himself innocent of sending, or attempting to send his ship to sea unseaworthy, still, it would entail a heavy expense on him, and the stigma which might attach to him afterwards for having to defend himself against a prosecution of the British Government for a misdemeanour, might be so obnoxious, that it might have a serious effect on his *status* in the country, if it did not otherwise injure his credit, or tend to drive him out of the business altogether. Such cases may occur at any time, under the Bill now before the House of Lords, if it becomes law, and as many of our most prominent public men in Canada, are largely interested in shipping, including many members of the Legislature, no one could tell, who might be the first who might be placed in such an expensive, humiliating, and even degrading position, as to be under the necessity of defending himself from a Government prosecution for misdemeanor, and which, if sustained on account of insufficient evidence of innocence or otherwise, would mean confinement in the Penitentiary.

On the other hand, in the case of the British shipowner living in the United Kingdom, whose ship is in the United Kingdom, in difficulty, on account of alleged unseaworthiness, he is at the scene of action, if necessary, in a few hours; and having all his witnesses there, is in a position to defend himself at once, and make matters right, without having to travel three thousand miles, requiring from ten to fourteen days to do it.

The Canadian shipowner also alleges that he labours under another disadvantage, as compared with the shipowner of the United Kingdom, in the event of his ship being in any difficulty in the United Kingdom, on account of alleged unseaworthiness, as the principal portion of the tonnage of Great Britain is built of iron, and the Surveyors of the Board of Trade, are better acquainted with the construction of such ships, than they are of wooden ships, and in the event of repairs being ordered, his ship might fall into the hands of a surveyor who had no practical knowledge of wooden shipbuilding, and might consequently, through ignorance, order much more expensive repairs than might be actually necessary.

Having shown your Lordship, in what respect the Canadian shipowner feels, that he is placed at a disadvantage as compared with the shipowner of the United Kingdom, in submitting to the operation of recent Imperial Legislation relating to shipping, in which he has no voice or representation, I will now, with your permission, call your attention to the still more serious disadvantage under which he is placed while his vessel is in a port in the United Kingdom, as compared with foreign shipowners, under similar circumstances.

Under the laws now in force, foreign ships while in ports in the United Kingdom, are not subject to detention or penalties on account of unseaworthiness or overloading, but Canadian ships are liable to detention on both these grounds, and the owner is liable to heavy penalties, if he sends his ship to sea, in an unseaworthy state. By the Bill which has recently passed the House of Commons, relating to this subject, it has fortunately been provided by that body, that foreign vessels may be detained on account of being overloaded, in a similar manner as British ships may be detained, but this provision was not contained in the Bill, when originally prepared by the Board of Trade in February last, as they appear to have been afraid of interfering with foreign ships while in British Ports. But foreign vessels by this Bill as it now stands, are still exempt from any detention, restriction or penalty, on account of unseaworthiness, when taking cargoes from British ports, while a British vessel is liable to detention, for a similar cause, and the owner to heavy penalties both civil and criminal. A foreign unseaworthy vessel, as the Bill now stands, may therefore come to a port in England and carry away a British cargo, and ship British sailors, and be subject to no detentions or penalties, while a British or Canadian ship alleged to be unseaworthy, might not only be detained, but her owner, if a Canadian, living a long distance away, and knowing nothing of the circumstances connected with her being sent to sea, might find himself suddenly compelled to leave everything else, and come over to England to defend himself, at a heavy expense, from being convicted as a criminal, and if by any accident, he failed to obtain his witnesses or procure evidence of his innocence in time to secure his acquittal, he might even forfeit his personal liberty, and have to submit to imprisonment—rather a severe penalty for a respectable man of means to endure, on account of being a Canadian shipowner. It is true this may not happen often, as Canadian ships, engaged in the foreign carrying trades, are generally high-classed ships, and not likely to fall into the hands of the Board of Trade on account of unseaworthiness, but if the law remains as it has passed the House of Commons, such a thing *may* happen, and the very fact that there is a law on the Statute Book which would permit it to happen, is quite enough to deter many of our most respectable and wealthy shipowners from continuing in a trade which may lead to such degrading and obnoxious results. Can it be wondered at, that a member of the House of Commons of Canada, and a shipowner, when speaking in the excitement of the moment, of this proposed law, and the humiliating and dangerous position in which a Canadian shipowner might find himself placed, stated that it would be an outrage if it was allowed to pass. Is it surprising that the shipowners of Canada have said to their Government through their representatives,—"The operation of the law, as it stands at present, "affects so unfavourably and so unjustly, Canadian tonnage as compared with foreign "tonnage, that if continued, will destroy the business of shipbuilding and shipowning "in Canada, which has hitherto been one of our chief and most successful industries, "for our expensive and high classed wooden ships cannot compete on unequal terms "with cheap low classed wooden ships of foreign countries, such as Norway, Italy and "the United States, and what shipowner of means and position will be willing "to continue in a business in which there is so much risk, and in which there is a "possibility of incurring such serious penalties, both civil and criminal."

In the meantime, the foreign shipowner, who is preparing to take advantage of the liberal terms on which he is invited to come and participate in the British carrying trade, is rather surprised to find that his old unseaworthy ship can come and take away a British cargo, and no questions asked, while a Canadian wooden ship, which is his competitor in certain trades, is subject to all kinds of detentions, penalties and annoyances, and her owner even liable under certain circumstances to be sent to prison.

Such legislation as this cannot but have a most prejudicial and pernicious effect

on our Canadian shipping, and, if continued for any length of time in this direction, must inevitably drive our most respectable and wealthy shipowners out of the business altogether, and destroy one of the most successful and useful industries of the Dominion. I venture to say that proposed legislation, having such a dangerous effect on this important branch of commerce in Canada, could not possibly be sustained in our Legislature, and I do not think a public man could be found in our Parliament to propose it.

If it is necessary to illustrate the probable working of the proposed law, I might take the case of two vessels, built within a few hundred feet of each other; one on the banks of the St. Croix River, in the State of Maine; the other on the banks of the same river, in the Province of New Brunswick, by two brothers; one originally a British subject, but now a naturalised subject of the United States, residing in the State of Maine; the other a Canadian, and a loyal British subject, proud of his British origin, and attached to British institutions, his Queen, and his country. When his ship is completed he has her classed in Lloyd's, as she has been built under special survey, and no effort or expense on his part has been spared to make her a good seaworthy vessel. She is then sent to England with a cargo, as she cannot carry a cargo from the State of Maine to New Orleans, or from New York to San Francisco, a distance of thousands of miles, as the Americans say these are coasting voyages. When she comes to England she delivers her cargo, and proceeds with another cargo, on another voyage. After the captain and agent have done everything they could think of, that the law required, to make her seaworthy, it may happen, that in the course of the voyage, she may get lost, and the crew may be brought back to England. Some dispute may have arisen between the captain and crew in the meantime, and the latter make complaint to the Board of Trade that the ship was not seaworthy when she left England. The owner, when he hears of the loss of his vessel, hurries over to England, to arrange about recovering his insurance, and when he arrives in this country he finds, to his astonishment, that a complaint has been made against him by the crew, on the ground of unseaworthiness of his vessel, and that the first thing he must do is to procure expensive Counsel to defend himself from a prosecution for misdemeanour. In order to do this, he needs money, and he applies to the underwriters for his insurance; but they tell him, they hear he is to be prosecuted on account of the alleged unseaworthiness of his ship, and that they will not pay him until that question is settled, and that he may consider himself fortunate if he escapes the Penitentiary. He might also find himself engaged in a lawsuit with the crew about some supposed claim for wages or otherwise, and until he could clear himself of the prosecution for misdemeanour by the Board of Trade, he might find himself involved in a sea of troubles, enough to deter him from ever building another ship.

Not so, with his brother, however, who sails his ship under the United States flag. He takes a cargo from Maine to New Orleans, then another cargo from New Orleans to Liverpool, and then he charters her, to carry another cargo from there to Australia. When she arrives in England, no questions are asked, as to her seaworthiness, and if she should be lost on her next voyage, he recovers his insurance at once, and cannot be prosecuted by the Board of Trade, either civilly or criminally, on account of any alleged unseaworthiness of his vessel.

How can we expect this important industry in Canada to prosper, covered over as the shipowner now is, with threats of penalties, and even loss of personal liberty? and I am not surprised that many of them have already made up their minds to go out of the business, as soon as they can dispose of their ships, even at a heavy loss.

It has hitherto been a common custom in Canada, for a number of persons to join together and own a ship in small shares, leaving it to one of their number as managing owner, to manage the business of the ship, but if the managing owner of a vessel is to be liable to be prosecuted for a misdemeanour, it will not be easy to procure

persons willing to incur this risk for the others, unless some plan can be devised of avoiding this responsibility, by forming themselves as owners into a Joint Stock Limited Liability Company, and appointing a ship's husband to transact their business, and be liable for prosecutions.

In Canada the business connected with shipping has been until recently very prosperous, and may be divided into two branches, viz.:—Shipbuilding and shipowning, but it frequently happens that the shipbuilder is also the owner or part owner of the vessel he builds, and by the profits of his vessel from the freights earned abroad, he has in many cases been enabled to go on, from year to year, building other new vessels, and adding to his accumulated wealth.

The earnings of the Canadian tonnage abroad, which are annually remitted to Canada, either in the shape of exchange, or goods, and outfits for new vessels, have conduced much to her prosperity, and will account to some extent for the amount of her importations so largely exceeding the amount of her exportations. In the shipbuilding branch of the business, many men are employed in procuring the timber from the woods, bringing it to the place of construction, and putting it together, and so long as the business was profitable, the earnings of the vessels abroad, were usually applied to a great extent in building more new vessels, so that the tonnage of Canada has been gradually increasing for many years past, till in 1873 it amounted to 1,073,718 tons; in 1874, to 1,158,363 tons; and in 1875, to 1,205,565 tons, making Canada probably the fourth largest shipowning country of the world, and representing a value on the most moderate calculation of 36,166,950 dollars, or about £7,233,390 sterling. Of this amount of tonnage about 800,000 tons are usually employed in the foreign carrying trade of the world, for Canadian ships, I believe, are to be found in nearly every port in the world, but if by any possibility the foreign-going tonnage of Canada is to be embarrassed with over legislation, or restrictions, which do not affect its foreign rivals, it will gradually shrink into smaller dimensions; our foreign rivals of Norway, Italy, and the United States will gradually increase; shipbuilding in Canada will diminish, and she will lose one of the most valuable industries which she now possesses. The amount of new tonnage built in Canada last year was 151,012 tons, valued at the lowest calculation at 6,795,540 dollars, or about £1,359,108 sterling. This is a large amount for one industry, which not only gives employment to a great number of the people in the country, but when it is employed abroad becomes, in ordinary times, a reproductive source of wealth to the country.

Is it advisable that this great industry, which is of so much importance to Canada, should be allowed to be overweighted to such an extent, as to be unable to compete with its foreign rivals, or to be so surrounded with such official encumbrances and difficulties, as to deter the capital of the country from being embarked in it?

I respectfully beg leave to submit for your Lordship's consideration whether it would not be advisable to devise a remedy for this unsatisfactory state of affairs, and arrest the feeling of dissatisfaction which is gradually growing up amongst a very intelligent and wealthy class of men, who have been for the last year or two, loud in their complaints to the Canadian Government as to the unfair treatment they were receiving under the Imperial legislation on this subject, which placed them, as British Colonists, in a worse position than foreigners, and I assure your Lordship, it is a subject which needs your consideration and assistance, as the representative of Canada in the Imperial Cabinet, in order to provide a solution of the difficulty.

There is no doubt the subject is surrounded with difficulties, but as Mr. Stanhope, of the Board of Trade, stated in his letter of the 1st March last to your Under-Secretary of State—"It is possible they may have to be faced and worked

out." Since that letter was written, however, these difficulties have been partially "faced and worked out" by the House of Commons, which has placed foreign overloaded vessels in a similar position to British overloaded vessels, while in ports in the United Kingdom. Mr. Farrer, in his letter of the 16th March last, addressed to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, also stated that the course proposed by the Canadian Government, which was to place our ships in as favorable a position in ports in the United Kingdom as foreign vessels, either by applying the unseaworthy clauses to foreign vessels, or to exempt Canadian ships from their operation, was, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, "fraught with mischief and danger," but the Canadian Government do not propose to separate Canadian ships from British ships, or to place Canadian ships, under any other flag or nationality, than the British flag and nationality.

A Canadian ship might, for instance, without interfering seriously with any principle adopted by the Board of Trade, be allowed by law, to come to England, and be exempted from the unseaworthy clauses of the Act, on production of such evidence of seaworthiness, as may be prescribed, such as her certificate of classification, which ought to be good enough evidence to satisfy any reasonable person, without going the length of saying, that she comes under any other different flag or nationality than she does now. And this slightly different treatment of a Canadian ship, from a British ship, in this *one* respect might be conceded, on the ground that her owner is not in England, and is too far away to be responsible for her being sent to sea, in an unseaworthy state, or to be liable to imprisonment for some oversight on the part of his captain or agent; and with reference to such Canadian vessels as have no certificate of classification, if there be any, they might then come under the cognizance of the Board of Trade Surveyors.

This is one solution of the difficulty, which would satisfy Canada, and which with all due deference to the opinion of the Board of Trade, does not seem to be altogether impossible, or to be fraught with very much mischief and danger, either to Canada, or to Imperial interests. All the fears entertained by the Board of Trade, about English owned ships being transferred to Canadian ports of Registry, to escape the operation of these clauses while in ports in England, amount to nothing, and I will undertake to show the Board of Trade, if permitted to do so, how all this danger could be easily provided for, without any difficulty whatever, if they are only willing to concede this point to us, which so many public men, with whom I have conversed, including Mr. Plimsoll, think, is only but fair and reasonable.

Although this war against rotten ships, was originally commenced, and has since been carried on by Mr. Plimsoll,—and it has been the means of disposing of many such ships, and has no doubt, done much good, still,—that is no reason why the owners of good classed Canadian ships, should be so harassed by threats of penalties, and even imprisonment, as to drive them out of the trade, which has been so valuable an industry to the Dominion. It does not appear necessary, in order to reach a certain number of old, unseaworthy, unclassed ships, that *our* shipowners should be covered with such threats of penalties, as are to be found in the Bill, and their good-classed ships, legislated out of the British carrying trade, to make room for Norwegian and Italian ships, of a much lower grade.

This is not the view taken of it by Mr. Plimsoll. He says, "Your Government "in Canada have gone ahead of us here, your law for loading grain at Montreal, "applicable to both British and Foreign vessels, would have satisfied me, and some "years ago you legislated for the safety of ships carrying wood cargoes, by providing "for a limited deck load in winter, all showing that you are quite able and ready to "legislate in the right direction, for the safety of ships, and if I had the power, I "would exempt Canadian ships from the operation of the unseaworthy clauses of the

" Bill, on your vessels producing certificates of classification from Lloyds, or of " seaworthiness from the Canadian Government." He says, " I do not want to " surround the shipowner with threats of penalties, to be imposed after the mischief is " done, and the vessel has gone to the bottom. I want to use precautionary measures to " prevent rotten ships going to sea, and drowning the sailors—I want the minimum of " interference with the shipowner, with the maximum of efficiency in saving life; but " the policy of the Board of Trade appears to be the maximum of annoyance and " interference with the shipowner, with the minimum of efficiency in saving life. My " object," he says, " is to reach the unseaworthy vessels, without annoying the owners " of seaworthy vessels."

It will be seen, therefore, that although Mr. Plimsoll commenced this agitation relating to unseaworthy ships, which has brought all this restrictive and onerous legislation on our shipowners, and which has created such dissatisfaction in Canada, still, in providing the means to carry out the idea of preventing unseaworthy ships from going to sea, the Board of Trade appear to have adopted a policy, which, although it may reach the dishonest shipowner in a roundabout kind of way, may be the means of injuring our shipping interests very seriously, and deterring many of our people of means, from continuing in a business which is surrounded with such a number of risks and difficulties, or, in other words, this policy appears to aim at reaching the bad shipowner, by threatening all shipowners, good and bad alike, with penal punishments.

I have not the slightest doubt that the worthy and amiable President of the Board of Trade, who feels most friendly to Canada, is just as philanthropic and anxious to get rid of unseaworthy ships, and save human life, as Mr. Plimsoll is, and I believe both are working honestly and faithfully in the same direction, up to a certain point, where they diverge, the one says:—" Government should not take the responsibility " of seeing that every ship is seaworthy before going to sea, but should throw that " responsibility on the shipowner, and if he sends his ship to sea in an unseaworthy " state, and it is found out, the law should provide means for punishing him severely " for so doing;" while the other says " No ship should be allowed to go to sea, until she " has been proved to be seaworthy, by certificate of classification or otherwise, as " prevention is better than cure."

Now, there are many arguments in support of both of these propositions; but it happens unfortunately for Canadian shipowners, that the policy adopted by the Board of Trade bears heavily on their interests, living, as they do, at such a distance from where the difficulties occur, and, until that policy is changed, with reference to Canadian ships, the dissatisfaction and agitation in Canada on this subject will continue, but Canadian shipowners will know that it is not Mr. Plimsoll's agitation which is placing their ships, while in ports in the United Kingdom, in a worse position than foreign ships, and they will also be made fully aware, by the published correspondence on the subject, that the Canadian Government has your Lordship's sympathy in the matter, when they refer to your Under-Secretary of State's letter of the 26th February, last, to the Board of Trade, in which he says, " That in your Lordship's opinion, it may " become a matter for serious consideration how far Her Majesty's Government will be " in a position to maintain the principle of subjecting Canadian vessels to restrictive " measures, from which United States, and other foreign vessels are exempt."

Having pointed out to your Lordship how Canadian ships are treated in England under the present Merchant Shipping Acts, and how it is proposed to treat them under the Bill now before the House of Lords, and having suggested a remedy for this unfair discrimination in favour of foreign ships, by accepting evidence of seaworthiness from Canadian shipowners, to exempt their ships from the operation of the unseaworthy sections of the Bill, which would be the most acceptable arrangement

for Canada, there still remains another plan by which Canadian shipowners might be satisfied with the Merchant Shipping Bill, if it should be found impossible to exempt their ships from the sections alluded to, viz., to extend these sections, so far as practicable, to foreign ships.

It may be said, that it would be impossible to reach the owners of such ships, residing in foreign countries, and therefore impossible to convict them of misdemeanour, if they kept out of British territory. This is quite true, but it is quite possible to modify the sections referred to, in the case of foreign ships, so as to prevent an unseaworthy foreign ship, taking away a British cargo, from a port in the United Kingdom, or shipping any British sailors, until she is made seaworthy, without going the length of punishing, either the owner or master, with imprisonment, which might give rise to embarrassing questions between the British, and Foreign Governments.

The British Government might very fairly, and reasonably say to Foreign Governments, "We have considered it necessary, in the interests of humanity, to procure "legislation, making stringent provisions to prevent unseaworthy ships from going to "sea, and drowning sailors, the punishment for which, in the case of a British subject, "is imprisonment; We are quite willing that Foreign ships should be allowed to come "to England, and participate in our carrying trade, on equal terms with British ships, "but while we are providing such severe penalties for British shipowners for sending "their ships to sea, in an unseaworthy state, we cannot permit Foreign vessels to carry "away British cargoes, and British sailors, from England, in an unseaworthy state, as "that would amount to a discrimination against our own vessels, in favor of Foreign "vessels. But while we do not propose to punish the owners of unseaworthy Foreign "vessels, both civilly and criminally, for sending their ships to sea, in an unseaworthy "state, from ports in England, as we do our own shipowners, still we cannot permit "such ships to take British cargoes, or British sailors, from ports in the United Kingdom, "if it is known to the Government, that they are unseaworthy, and if complaint is made "against them, steps will be taken to ascertain whether they are unseaworthy, and, if "found so, they will be detained until made seaworthy."

This, surely, would be a very reasonable proposition to which no Foreign Government would be likely to object, more particularly, when it is not proposed to impose any penalty, either on the owner or master, and the effect of it would be, to prevent any unseaworthy Foreign ships coming to England, to obtain freights. All vessels would then be placed on a similar footing, British, Canadian, Norwegian and other Foreign vessels alike, and I believe such legislation, if adopted, would give satisfaction, not only to British and Canadian shipowners, but to Foreign shipowners also, as it would tend equally to the safety of British and Foreign life and property, and prevent any undue discrimination between British and Foreign vessels, such as now exists under the present law.

At the ports of Montreal and Quebec, the law relating to the loading of grain cargoes, is very stringent, and prevents grain being loaded in any vessel, British or Foreign, except under the superintendence of the Port Warden, who will not allow the vessel to proceed with her loading, until he is satisfied that she is seaworthy, as regards her hull, and equipment, and he will not grant his certificate to enable her to clear, until he is satisfied that she is not improperly loaded or overloaded. Although this is a stringent law, still it is a good law, and has given satisfaction, I believe, to all interests, and I have never heard any complaints against it, either from British or foreign shipowners or masters. It has tended to save life and property, as previous to its enactment in its present shape in 1873, six steamships loaded with grain cargoes were lost in 1872 on their voyages to Europe, on account, it is supposed of improper loading, while none have been lost since, on that account. During the year ended

30th June, 1875, twenty-eight foreign vessels took cargoes to the United Kingdom from Montreal, loaded chiefly I believe, with grain, and still I heard no complaint from the owners, agents, or masters of these vessels, against this law. The Canadian law restricting deck loads of vessels laden with wood cargoes, during the winter months, to three feet of deals, applies to foreign vessels, as well as British vessels, and although many foreign vessels participate in this trade, I have not heard of any complaints from the owners, agents, or masters of such vessels. During the year ended 30th June, 1875, 308 foreign vessels carried away cargoes from Quebec, chiefly of wood, for the United Kingdom, and some of them after the 1st October, when our deck load law commences, but I never heard any complaints on account of that law.

The Canadian law relating to the shipping of seamen, was made exceedingly stringent, to prevent crimping, and even murder, at our large seaports, and requires *inter alia* that all seamen required by foreign vessels, must be shipped at the Government shipping office, so as to detect deserters from British ships, instead of allowing them to be shipped as formerly, merely at the Consul's office. This was objected to at first, by some of the Consuls, but since they have had some years experience of its working, I understand they are much pleased with it, all tending to show that foreign shipowners, and Foreign Governments, are not so unreasonable after all, when they find good laws made in the interest of humanity, and above all, when they find them administered faithfully and honestly, to all alike, British and foreign, as they are in Canada.

It may be argued by some persons, that Canada is not in a good position to judge of such questions, not having much experience or knowledge, of the views of foreigners engaged in the carrying trade of the world; but I assure your Lordship, that Canada has ample opportunities of forming a correct opinion on such matters. During the fiscal year ended 30th June, 1875, the number of vessels which cleared from Canada, for sea, with cargoes, was 7,572, measuring 2,740,504 tons, while of this number 5,463 vessels, 1,876,695 tons, were British and British Colonial, and 2,109 vessels, 863,809 tons, were foreign, showing that the foreign sea-going carrying trade of Canada, was performed by 68 per cent. of British and British Colonial vessels, and 32 per cent. of foreign vessels. Of the foreign vessels which competed with British and British Colonial vessels for the carrying trade of Canada last year, the bulk of them belonged to the United States, Norway and Sweden, although a considerable number of German, Italian and Danish vessels, also participated in it.

This, I presume, will show your Lordship that Canada has had ample experience of foreign vessels visiting her ports, to participate in the carrying trade, and that her own vessels have powerful competitors for such trade in United States, Norwegian, Swedish, Italian, German, and Danish vessels, and our experience of these vessels, so far, has been, that they quietly acquiesce in our Marine laws, which apply to them, knowing that they are good laws, made in their interest, as well as in the interest of British or Canadian vessels. But we must not conceal the fact from ourselves, that Norwegian, Swedish, German, Danish, and Italian vessels, can be built and sailed, fully as cheap as our vessels, their labour being rather cheaper than ours, and their crews being able and willing to live on cheaper and coarser food then our men; and as they are able to come into our own waters, and compete successfully with our own vessels, it would be a very unwise and even dangerous policy, to legislate in such a way as to give these foreign vessels any advantage whatever, either directly or indirectly, in our own waters, over our own vessels, where the competition is so great and the race so even, as it is proposed to do by the present Bill, in the waters of the United Kingdom.

While Canada wishes to act in a liberal spirit towards foreign ships, she must

not forget her own interests, but must act justly towards her own people, and give no advantage whatever to foreigners over them.

There is still another view of the question, which I will only allude to, as it scarcely lies within the scope of my mission to discuss it; I allude to the argument, which is sometimes used by utilitarians, that England has no interest in the growth and prosperity of the Canadian Merchant Marine, as in the event of her tonnage not being able to compete with foreign tonnage, in the carrying trade of the United Kingdom, such trade must naturally fall, to some extent, into the hands of foreigners, if they can carry cheaper than Canadians, and that England only wants cheap freights, without reference to the question of who may do the work. But I think it will be readily admitted, that England has a very large indirect interest in the prosperity of the Mercantile Marine of Canada, which is such an excellent nursery for raising a fine class of navigators and mariners, who might, in a time of difficulty, be found very useful, to man the Imperial ships of war.

Canada has at this moment, shipping afloat, engaged in the foreign carrying trade of the United Kingdom and the world at large, amounting to about 800,000 tons, representing nearly 1,000 shipmasters, most of whom are certificated, about 2,000 first and second officers, and about 20,000 seamen, not all Canadians, it is true, but a large proportion of them, hailing from Canada. The very fact, that such a reserve force of mariners is close at hand, from which England could procure a supply of sailors, in time of need, must surely give the mother country, a great, although indirect interest, in the growth and prosperity of the mercantile marine of Canada, and it is not surprising that your Lordship sympathised with the demands of the Canadian Government, when they asked, that foreign vessels be placed on no better footing in ports in the United Kingdom than Canadian vessels, as Canadian shipowners will see, by a reference to the letter, dated 4th March last, addressed by your directions to the Board of Trade, by your Under Secretary of State, in which he says, "That your Lordship, "looking to the nature and objects of the proposed legislation, and to the precedents "cited by the Canadian Government, cannot but feel much pressed by the arguments "advanced;" but as the Board of Trade have not yet seen fit to concede our simple request, to be treated as well as foreigners in this matter, it may be some satisfaction to them to feel, that at all events, they have your Lordship's sympathy and interest on this question, until some plan can be adopted, of surmounting the difficulties referred to.

Since the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons, the Minister of Marine of Canada, has telegraphed to me, that its provisions, regarding foreign vessels, being placed in a more advantageous position than Canadian vessels, is very unsatisfactory to Canada, and he hopes the required changes will be made in the House of Lords, and, I trust, it is not yet too late, for your Lordship to reconsider this matter, and take the necessary steps to meet the views of the Government and shipowners of Canada, by either of the plans which I have herein suggested.

At the port of Saint John, New Brunswick, which is the largest registry port in the British Dominions, out of the United Kingdom, I notice by the newspapers that on the 31st ultimo, after it was known by telegraph, that the Merchant Shipping Bill had passed the House of Commons, the Board of Trade of that city, passed a resolution, "protesting against the Bill alluded to, affecting Canadian ships, and requesting the "Government of Canada to endeavour to avert, by any constitutional means in their "power, such violation of the rights of Canada, and ask the Imperial Authorities to "keep their legislation, as regards Canadian shipping, within constitutional bounds." I am not aware, as to which provision of the Bill, they allude, as being beyond constitutional bounds, but I merely refer to this action on the part of that Board, which is composed of many intelligent, wealthy, and highly respectable merchants and ship-

owners, to shew your Lordship, that there is now existing among the shipowners of Canada a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the course of recent Imperial legislation on this subject, which it would be very desirable to remove, as soon as possible.

If the Bill becomes law, in its present shape, I feel convinced it cannot remain so, for any length of time, and that the consideration of the question will again come up, and I think it not improbable, that shipowners generally, will prefer to be relieved of the threats of penalties contained in the Bill, and in lieu thereof, would be glad to accept some provision, that evidence of seaworthiness, should be exacted from all vessels, before they are allowed to proceed to sea. This plan will reach the unseaworthy vessels, without causing any annoyance, or inconvenience to the owners of thoroughly good, sound, classed ships, and I believe we are gradually drifting into such a system.

I now beg leave to draw your Lordship's attention to the subject of deck loading, as, in its present shape, as contained in the Bill, now before the House of Lords, the Minister of Marine has telegraphed me, it is very unsatisfactory to Canada. In the Bill originally prepared by the Board of Trade, last February, they kindly adopted the provisions of the Canadian deck load law, which restricts deck loads to Europe, to three feet of deals or battens, but no timber, and the Bill passed the Committee of the House of Commons with this provision in it, and I urged the President of the Board of Trade, not to listen to any proposition, which might be made to change this provision, or to abolish deck loads altogether. However when the Bill was under discussion, previous to its being read a second time, Mr. Plimsoll, acting from a humanitarian point of view, moved an amendment to add the words, after Timber "Deals and Battens," which would have the effect of preventing vessels from Canada taking any timber, deals, or battens, on deck, between the 1st October and the 16th March.

This amendment was carried against the Government by a small majority, through the support of Mr. Plimsoll's friends and others, who considered it best for vessels to have no deck loads in winter, and who thought that Canada would not object to it very much, as it treats all vessels, and all countries, British and Foreign, alike, whereas Canada, in the interests of humanity, had previously enacted a law, imposing restrictions on her own wood trade, which did not exist in the United States of America or in the Baltic ports.

The amendment referred to, was an unfortunate move for Canada, as it interferes seriously with her law, which was passed after much consideration and discussion in the Canadian Parliament, and was found to be ample, in the interests of humanity, to secure life and property, and still allowed certain vessels, which were built specially to carry deckloads, and which have no spar decks but high bulwarks, to take a limited quantity of light wood on deck, which can be easily disposed of, in case of any danger.

Shipmasters have frequently assured me, that for this class of vessels, three feet of deals on deck in the winter months, was not by any means objectionable, if nothing else was allowed, beyond a few store spars for ships' use, as there was generally two or three feet clear space between the upper part of the deals, and the top of the main rail, which still left sufficient room to work the ship.

During the debate in the Imperial House of Commons on this question, I was very glad to find that the President of the Board of Trade and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, did all they possibly could for Canada, to maintain in the Bill, the Canadian provisions relating to deck loads, but the humanitarian view of the question prevailed, and all timber, deals and battens were prohibited on deck, after the 1st October.

I much regret this decision of the House of Commons, relating to deck loads, as it will be very unsatisfactory to those of our shipowners in New Brunswick and

Nova Scotia, who have built vessels specially with high bulwarks, for carrying deck cargoes, and does not appear very complimentary to the Canadian Parliament, which some years ago, enacted its own law, relating to this subject, or to the Hon. Mr. Mitchell, the late energetic and able Minister of Marine, who took much trouble in this matter, and, in the interests of humanity, brought in the Bill, and carried it through the Committee of Banking and Commerce, and afterwards through the House of Commons, where it received much discussion, and encountered a good deal of opposition from the shipowners of his own province, many of whom were averse to Government interference in this question.

As the majority in the Imperial House of Commons against the Government on this amendment was small, I am sure the Canadian Government and the shipowners of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, will feel much pleased, if your Lordship can see your way clear, to have the principles of the Canadian law relating to deck loads, restored to the Bill, and I am of opinion that some of the members of the House of Commons who voted for the amendment were under the erroneous impression, that Canada would have no objections to the prohibition of deck loads altogether, during the winter months, provided it applied to all countries alike.

If this cannot be done, a provision might be inserted, that vessels might carry during the winter months, deals and battens on deck (in addition to five store spars) not exceeding three feet in height, provided there was still three feet of clear space from the upper part of the deals, to the upper part of the main rail. Such a provision as this would obviate the difficulty to a great extent, and would allow vessels built specially for carrying deck loads, with high bulwarks, to carry a small deck load, and might obviate the necessity of their owners building spar decks on them, in order to carry deck cargoes, as I suppose they will have to do, if the Bill passes in its present shape, in order to make their vessels pay.

But the Bill as it stands at present, will not carry out the intention of the House of Commons, and will not prohibit vessels carrying during the winter months, deck cargoes of some descriptions of wood goods, such as boards, staves, palings, or even a deck load of wet rough spars, the very worst kind of deck load which could be placed on a ship; Pig iron or other heavy dangerous material, could also be carried on deck under the Bill. I have drawn the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to this defect, and it is probable he may take the necessary steps to have it remedied in the House of Lords. If the Bill passes with this defect in it, the effect of it would be, to allow vessels from the United States and the Baltic, to carry during the winter months, deck loads of any description of cargo except timber, deals or battens, while vessels from Canada, under our Canadian deck load law, would not be allowed to carry such deck loads, thus making a discrimination, between vessels from Canada, and vessels from Foreign countries.

There is a curious clause at the end of the 21st section, relating to deck loading, which appears difficult to explain, or to account for the reason of its being placed there but it shows how carefully the interests of foreign vessels were watched and protected in the framing of the Bill. This section provides, that no penalty shall attach to any foreign ship coming into any port of the United Kingdom, under stress of weather, or for repairs, or for any other purpose than the delivery of her cargo, with timber, deals or battens, on deck. Now, there is no doubt that this is a very wise and reasonable provision, not only in favour of foreign vessels, but even if it had extended to Canadian vessels, or British vessels generally. Suppose the case of two vessels, one a Norwegian and the other a Canadian, loading a cargo of deals at Quebec, for a port in France, after the 1st October. Under the Canadian law, both would be allowed to carry a cargo of deals, three feet in height on deck, and we may suppose, for example, that both meet with heavy weather and some damage on the voyage across, and found

it necessary to put in, to a port in Ireland for repairs. How are they each treated then in a British port? On equal terms it would be supposed, as they were treated in Canada, and as they would be in France. Not at all; Imperial legislation, which under this Bill is so careful of the interests of Foreign ships, punishes the Canadian vessel for coming into a British port, under stress of weather with cargo on deck, and treats the foreigner, as it should do, with proper consideration for his misfortunes, even if he has a cargo on deck like the Canadian, and inflicts no punishment on him. I can scarcely imagine that it was ever intended to make such a discrimination as this in favour of a Foreign ship, as against a Canadian or any other British ship, and I can only suggest that it should not be allowed to remain in the Bill, but the word *foreign* should be struck out of this clause, so as to place a Canadian ship in as good a position as a foreign ship, when coming into a British port in distress with a deck cargo, bound for another port, out of the United Kingdom.

Canadian shipowners have also great objections to the novel principle introduced into the Bill of measuring the open space on deck on which deck loads are carried, as it will add materially to the tonnage dues of their vessels, which they think are heavy enough already. It will also tend materially to increase the receipts of wharf owners, dock companies, lighthouse authorities, and others, at the expense of the shipowners, who are of opinion that their vessels are unable to bear any additional rates.

I am afraid it will prove very embarrassing to the trade of Canada, not included within our inland waters, as much of our carrying trade both coasting and Foreign, is done during the summer months, by shallow, broad vessels, built for the purpose, which carry nearly as much wood on deck, as they do in the hold. It will give rise to constant disputes between the owners of these vessels, and the owners or lessees of the docks and wharves at which they discharge their cargoes, who, of course, will demand the full wharf or dock dues, which can be recovered by law.

The 20th Section of the Bill provides that the space shall be ascertained by an Officer of the Board of Trade, or of Customs, but it so happens that the Board of Trade has no officers in Canada, and the Surveying officers of shipping there, are not necessarily officers of Customs. Great confusion and uncertainty might thus be created at ports where the measuring officer is not an officer of Customs. I cannot believe, however, that in preparing this section of the Bill, the Board of Trade intended it to apply to ports out of the United Kingdom, as I am sure they have no wish to impose Imperial legislation on Canadian ships in Canadian waters, which might be considered an interference with legislation of the Canadian Parliament, relative to the local trade of the country.

I requested the President of the Board of Trade to exempt vessels in the Inland waters of Canada from the operation of the Bill, before it was read a second time, in the House of Commons, and he kindly consented to do so; the 34th section exempting ships while on the inland waters of Canada was therefore added, but I am afraid, this will scarcely answer the purpose, as a vessel carrying a cargo from Quebec to Pictou or Halifax, could not be considered as being in the Inland waters, as at Quebec she would be in the Inland waters, while at Halifax she would be at a seagoing port on the Atlantic. I have since asked the President of the Board of Trade, if he would be kind enough to make the necessary arrangements, to have the word *Inland* struck out of the Bill before it is read a second time in the House of Lords, and I will also feel much obliged to your Lordship, to see that this alteration is made before the Bill becomes law, as in a country like Canada, with such an extensive lake, river, and gulf navigation, it is very difficult to define where the Inland waters terminate, and the Gulf or sea waters commence, and it might give rise to very embarrassing questions, unless some definition of the words *Inland waters* is given in the Bill. The simplest and best plan would be therefore, to delete the word

Inland and let the section provide that the Bill shall not apply to ships "while in the waters of North America." By adopting this plan, it will get rid of the difficulty which will probably arise, if the 20th section of the Bill is allowed to extend to our seagoing and coasting vessels, which nearly all carry a large portion of their cargo on deck during the summer months, to ports in the United States as well as in Canada.

The 19th section of the Bill, provides a penalty, not exceeding three hundred pounds, on the managing owner, agent, or master of any British ship, carrying grain in bulk, in any part of the world, unless it is secured from shifting by boards, bulkheads, or otherwise, while foreign ships may engage in the same trade, without being subject to any penalty of this kind, thereby placing foreign ships, carrying grain from a foreign port to England, or from one foreign port to another, in a more advantageous position than Canadian ships, while engaged in the same trade. It has been stated that this cannot be much of a grievance to British shipowners, as Foreign shipmasters, as a rule generally stow their grain cargoes more carefully than British shipmasters, but still, if Foreign ships are placed under less restrictions or penalties, than Canadian ships, our shipowners will be dissatisfied, on the ground that they have not equal privileges under British legislation with foreigners, and that, therefore, foreigners will beat them in the competition for the trade. For instance, take two vessels, one a Canadian, and the other a Foreigner, loading grain in the Black Sea for a port in France, where they might be supposed to be free from any British jurisdiction, beyond the laws and rules of the respective ports where they shipped and discharged their cargoes. It is not so, however, the Foreigner is free, but the Canadian has the watchful eye of the Merchant Shipping Act upon her; and it may happen that her captain, in fixing his shifting boards, did not take sufficient precaution to make them strong enough, and, meeting with heavy weather, some of the boards gave way, and the cargo slightly shifted a little to one side. The port of delivery is reached in safety, and the cargo is delivered all right and in good order, and the captain then proceeds to England to look for another freight. In the meantime, some of the sailors, who may have had some differences with the captain, wish to annoy him, and they lodge information against him, that the cargo shifted, as the shifting boards were not strongly enough secured, and as the *onus probandi* is on the captain to show they were sufficiently secured, he finds himself in a dilemma, as there is already *prima facie* evidence to prove the contrary, on account of the cargo having actually shifted, and unless he can by his officers or otherwise show that the cargo was sufficiently secured at the port of shipment, and that it shifted owing to some accident beyond his control, and that he did not knowingly violate the law, the magistrate might inflict the full penalty on him of three hundred pounds, and the law provides that it may be recovered upon summary conviction. No such penalty could be inflicted on the foreigner, and in the event of such a case happening to the Canadian, it would make a serious difference in the result of the two voyages, greatly in favour of the foreigner, the Canadian being much more heavily weighted with penalties by British law than his rival.

This section will be very objectionable to Canadian shipowners, and I hope you will be able to exempt Canadian ships from its operation, or at all events while they are beyond the waters of the United Kingdom, and allow them to carry cargoes, with as little restriction, as their foreign rivals.

Your Lordship is aware, that I was sent here, by the Canadian Government, to confer with the officers of Her Majesty's Government, relative to this subject, with the view of obtaining such alterations and modifications in the Bill, now before Parliament, as would make it more acceptable to Canadian shipowners, and place their vessels in as favorable a position in ports of the United Kingdom, as foreign vessels, a request so reasonable, that I had no doubt, after it was shewn to Her Majesty's Government how injuriously the Bill, as first introduced, would affect Canadian

shipping interests, that it would be readily conceded, as I was quite sure that Her Majesty's Government would not wish to adopt any policy, which would have the effect of injuring so great an industry as the Mercantile Marine of Canada, which if allowed to progress, as it has hitherto done, would soon rival the Merchant Marine of any European State, with the exception of that, of the United Kingdom itself.

On my arrival in this country, I immediately reported myself to your Lordship, and was then referred to the Board of Trade, the President of which, had charge of the Bill. Since then, I have been frequently in communication with that gentleman, and I have also had the honor of discussing the subject with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has not only taken much interest in the question, but also took a very prominent part in the debates of the House of Commons, when the Bill was under the consideration of that body. I have great pleasure in stating to your Lordship, that from both these distinguished gentlemen, I received the most cordial reception, and some points, in the interest of Canada, have been conceded by the House of Commons, since the Bill was first introduced, partly at the instance of the President of the Board of Trade, and partly by other influences, but I regret to inform your Lordship, that although I have fully explained to the Board of Trade, both verbally and in a letter dated the 17th ultimo, a copy of which I submitted for your Lordship's consideration, that their policy as contained in the Bill, of placing foreign ships, in a more favorable position than Canadian ships, was in the opinion of Canadians, an unwise and unfair policy, and could not be fairly and reasonably defended, and if finally adopted, would cause great dissatisfaction in Canada, and tend to injure seriously one of the chief industries of the Dominion, still, I have not succeeded in persuading them, to change that policy, as regards Canadian ships. I feel under many obligations, on behalf of Canada however, to both of the gentlemen alluded to, for the efforts made by them in the House of Commons, to meet the views of the Canadian Government, with reference to the deck load question, which unfortunately were unsuccessful.

I have still hopes, however, that your Lordship will obtain a reconsideration of the question, before the Bill is finally disposed of in the House of Lords, and provide a remedy for the complaints of the Canadian shipowners, which might possibly be effected by some of the plans suggested, unless the Government feel unable at present, to change the general policy of the measure, with reference to their other obligations and duties, but at all events, I feel satisfied, from the conversations I have had the honor of having with your Lordship, that your sympathy is with us, and that you will do all in your power to aid us in the matter, and if possible, remove the causes of complaint, to which so many objections have been made by our shipowners, and I am quite sure, the great interest your Lordship has taken in the question, on our behalf will be much appreciated in Canada, when it becomes known there.

Before I was appointed to this mission, the shipowners of St. John, New Brunswick, had submitted the names to the Government of Canada, of four gentlemen now residing in England, but who were formerly prominent merchants and shipowners in New Brunswick, as gentlemen of great experience and knowledge on this subject, with whom the Representative who might be sent to England in connection with this matter, might consult and advise as to the proper course to adopt to bring their complaints before the Imperial authorities. One of these gentlemen is the Honorable John Robertson, a Senator of Canada, now residing in London, and who to my knowledge, has within the last thirty-four years been considered quite an authority in New Brunswick on all mercantile and shipping questions. The other three gentlemen—Messrs. William Wright, James Nevins, and George W. Roberts—reside in Liverpool, and are extensive owners of shipping, for the most part built in Canada, and are gentlemen, who are thoroughly conversant with everything connected with the building and sailing of ships. I have been in communication with all of

these gentlemen from time to time since my arrival here, as the representatives of a large number of our shipowners in New Brunswick, and they are looking anxiously to the result of the measure in the House of Lords, with the hope that the required changes will be made there.

In a letter dated the 25th ultimo, which these three gentlemen, residing in Liverpool, addressed to me they state as follows:—"Feeling the justice of your "argument and claim, on behalf of the shipping of Canada, we hope you will maintain "your ground firmly, for compliance with the reasonable demands you have put "forward, believing as we do, that they must eventually be complied with, otherwise "consequences of the most serious nature will occur, for we believe, that should the "Imperial Goverment continue to legislate as they are doing, so injuriously and "unjustly, against the shipping of the Dominion, one of two things must be the result "either the absolute destruction of the Mercantile Marine of Canada, or the "transference of Canadian shipping to a foreign flag. We certainly look forward, "with the gloomiest forebodings to the future of the Mercantile Marine of the "Dominion, unless the present policy is altered.

"We believe that a three feet deck load can be carried safely during the "Winter season, when properly secured; it is to the owners interest to have this done, "as the deck freight is seldom insured.

"Those who formerly invested in wooden ships, are afraid to do so, and will "make no new contracts. Owners here who formerly bought Canadian ships, are now "purchasing iron ships; even Canadian shipowners themselves, decline investing in "new tonnage, pending the present legislation, and the result is that the shipyards in "the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion are being one after another shut up; and "during the present year, this evil will be greatly felt. We would fain express a hope "that the Imperial Government will not by its actions, continue to advance the pros-"perity of the Mercantile Marine of Foreign Countries, by the destruction of that "of Canada."

These, my Lord, are ominous words, expressed by responsible, intelligent, and wealthy shipowners, who thoroughly understand the questions on which they write, and their opinions are entitled to the greatest possible weight.

Before concluding this letter, I avail myself of the opportunity of thanking your Lordship, for the patience and consideration, with which you have discussed the subject with me, when I have had the honor of seeing you. I have shewn your Lordship, that the Bill as it now stands, still contains some very objectionable provisions, which affect Canadian interests, but I trust that it may yet be so amended, as to make it more acceptable to the shipowners of Canada, who feel so deeply interested in the matter, and if this desirable end can be accomplished, before I return to Canada to report to my Government the result of my mission, I shall feel grateful to your Lordship, for your influence on our behalf, and I hope the various interests affected by the measure, officials, shipowners, humanitarians, and all, may yet be able to join together in all thankfulness and say—"Let us have peace."

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

WM. SMITH,

Deputy-Minister of Marine of Canada.

(1859 - 1932)